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Tuna Newsletter

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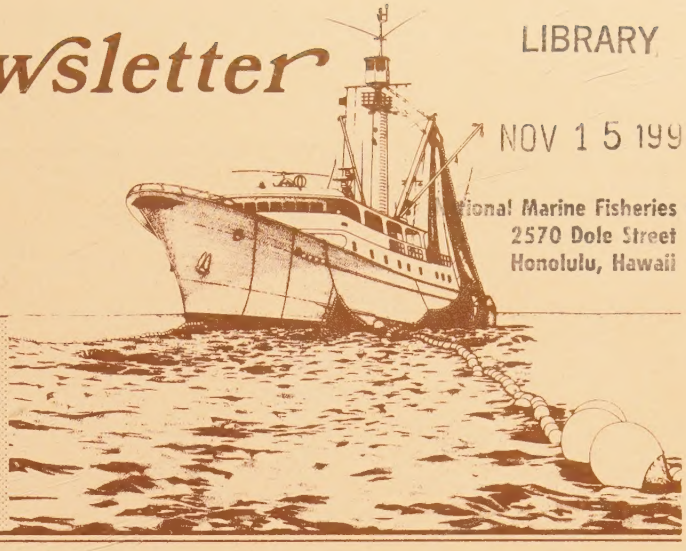

National Marine Fisheries Service
- Southwest Region
- Southwest Fisheries Science Center

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U.S. TUNA STATISTICS

Editor's note: The following articles were prepared by NMFS personnel from data and information gathered from sources in the U.S. tuna industry. (A. Jackson)

U.S. CANNED TUNA INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS, SECOND QUARTER 1991

Total receipts of tuna by U.S. canners during the second quarter of 1991 (April-June) decreased by 4% to the equivalent of 130,500 short tons (st) of whole fish (round weight), compared to the second quarter 1990 (Table 1). Skipjack receipts were up by 12%, while yellowfin and albacore receipts were down by 12% and 23%, respectively. Although the vast majority of tuna receipts by U.S. canners is of whole fish, some quantity of tuna is received as loins or gilled-and-gutted. The amounts of tuna loins received during the second quarters of 1990 and 1991 were virtually the same at 8,700 st and 8,900 st, respectively. [The round weight totals used above were approximated by converting weights of loins and gilled-and-gutted receipts by factors of 2.25 and 1.11, respectively. For the remainder of this article unconverted receipts are used unless otherwise stated.]

Receipts of tuna in California and American Samoa were up by 17%, while receipts in Puerto Rico were down by 24% (Table 2). Domestically-caught deliveries to canneries in Puerto Rico were down by 59%, largely a result of a reduction in the size of the U.S. tropical tuna purse seine fleet in the eastern Pacific. Twenty-nine U.S. purse seiners were active in the eastern Pacific at the end of the second quarter of 1990 compared to only 14 in 1991. Skipjack tuna was the principal component of all domestic deliveries at

Table 1. Total U.S. cannery receipts (st) by classification of tuna as received by packers for the **second** quarters of 1990 and 1991. Totals may not add due to rounding.

SPECIES		Albacore	Skipjack	Yellowfin[1]	TOTAL
1990	ROUND	24,300	45,100	46,600	116,000
	GILLED & GUTTED	0	0	800	800
	LOIN	2,800	5,200	700	8,700
	TOTAL (AS RECEIVED)	27,100	50,300	48,100	125,500
	TOTAL (ESTIMATED ROUND WEIGHT)[2]	30,500	56,800	49,100	136,400
1991	ROUND	20,600	50,800	37,300	108,700
	GILLED & GUTTED	0	0	1,500	1,500
	LOIN	1,200	5,700	1,900	8,900
	TOTAL (AS RECEIVED)	21,900	56,500	40,800	119,200
	TOTAL (ESTIMATED ROUND WEIGHT)[2]	23,400	63,700	43,400	130,500

[1]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.
[2]Converted to round weight by using factors of 1.11 for gilled-and-gutted and 2.25 for loins.

Table 2. U.S. cannery receipts (st) of domestic and imported tuna by species for the second quarters of 1990, 1991 and the recent (1986-90) second quarter averages. Totals may not add due to rounding.

SPECIES		Albacore	Skipjack	Yellowfin[1]	TOTAL
AMERICAN SAMOA & CALIFORNIA					
1990	DOMESTIC	1,800	20,500	16,300	38,500
	IMPORTED	6,500	9,300	4,400	20,200
	TOTAL	8,200	29,800	20,700	58,700
1991	DOMESTIC	1,900	23,400	15,600	40,900
	IMPORTED	7,300	14,300	6,000	27,600
	TOTAL	9,200	37,700	21,700	68,600
1986-90 Average	DOMESTIC	800	23,100	18,900	42,800
	IMPORTED	5,500	9,700	3,500	18,600
	TOTAL	6,300	32,700	22,400	61,400
PUERTO RICO					
1990	DOMESTIC	0	2,700	15,000	17,700
	IMPORTED	18,800	17,800	12,400	49,000
	TOTAL	18,800	20,500	27,500	66,800
1991	DOMESTIC	0	4,100	3,300	7,300
	IMPORTED	12,700	14,800	15,800	43,300
	TOTAL	12,700	18,800	19,100	50,600
1986-90 Average	DOMESTIC	200	6,600	18,600	25,400
	IMPORTED	21,900	18,700	15,400	56,000
	TOTAL	22,100	25,300	34,000	81,500
TOTAL					
1990	DOMESTIC	1,800	23,100	31,300	56,200
	IMPORTED	25,300	27,100	16,800	69,200
	TOTAL	27,100	50,300	48,100	125,500
1991	DOMESTIC	1,900	27,500	18,900	48,200
	IMPORTED	20,000	29,100	21,900	70,900
	TOTAL	21,900	56,500	40,800	119,200
1986-90 Average	DOMESTIC	1,000	29,700	37,500	68,200
	IMPORTED	27,400	28,400	18,900	74,700
	TOTAL	28,400	58,000	56,400	142,900

[1]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

Table 3. U.S. cannery imports (st) of tuna by species[1] and flag of catcher vessel for the second quarter of 1991. Totals for the second quarter of 1990 are given for comparison. Note that the flag of the catcher vessel does not necessarily reflect the country of export or point of shipment. Totals may not add due to rounding.

COUNTRY	1991				1990
	ALB	SKJ	YFT[2]	TOTAL	TOTAL
ECUADOR	0	100	1,900	2,100	5,200
FRANCE	*	*	2,000	2,100	2,200
GHANA	0	6,800	1,600	8,400	5,600
JAPAN	2,800	2,200	1,500	6,500	7,700
MALTA	*	400	800	1,200	0
NEW ZEALAND	700	0	0	700	700
PANAMA	300	1,200	1,200	2,700	2,800
SOLOMON ISLANDS	0	500	200	700	0
SOUTH KOREA	1,700	8,300	2,900	12,900	7,400
SPAIN	*	4,700	6,900	11,600	5,100
TAIWAN	14,000	2,600	1,200	17,700	16,300
VANUATU	0	1,500	500	2,000	3,000
VENEZUELA	*	400	1,100	1,400	5,300
OTHER	500	400	100	1,000	3,200
UNKNOWN	0	0	0	0	4,700
TOTAL (AS RECEIVED)	20,000	29,100	21,900	70,900	69,200
TOTAL (ESTIMATED RND WT)[3]	21,500	36,600	25,200	83,400	79,700

*Less than 100 st reported for this category.

1) ALB=albacore; SKJ=skipjack; YFT=yellowfin.

2) May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

3) Converted to round weight by using factors of 1.11 for gilled-and-gutted and 2.25 for loins.

27,500 st, followed by yellowfin (18,900 st) and albacore (1,900 st). Imports led domestic deliveries with 59% of the total. Skipjack was the leading import at 29,100 st, followed by yellowfin (21,900 st) and albacore (20,000 st). The leading non-U.S. supplier was Taiwan, with 25% of the import market, followed by South Korea and Spain with 18% and 16% of the market, respectively (Table 3). The western Pacific Ocean was the main source of all three important tuna species in U.S. cannery receipts: skipjack (37,900 st), yellowfin (19,500 st) and albacore (8,800 st, Table 4).

Contract prices for domestically caught tuna delivered to U.S. canners in American Samoa and Puerto Rico were higher on average than second quarter 1990 prices for all size categories of fish except for yellowfin weighing over 20 pounds which showed a 6-8% price decrease (Table 5). U.S. imports of canned tuna packed in water totaled 29,300 st for the second quarter of 1991, up 51% from the second quarter 1990 total.

Total receipts of tuna by U.S. canners for the first two quarters of 1991, in round weight, decreased by 4% to 233,800 st, compared to the total for the same period in 1990 (Table 6). Deliveries of skipjack were up by 24%, while deliveries of yellowfin and albacore were down 20% and 27%, respectively. The amount of tuna loins delivered increased by 43% to 18,600 st. For receipts not converted to round weights, the total for the first two quarters of 1991 was down by 7% from 1990, with imports accounting for 59% of the total (Table 7).

1991 U.S. imports of canned tuna packed in water totaled 128,848 st as of September 29, up 24% from the total for the same period in 1990.

Table 4. Receipts (st) of tuna by U.S. canneries by species[1] and area of capture for the second quarters of 1990 and 1991. Totals may not add due to rounding.

SOURCE	1990			1991		
	ALB	SKJ	YFT[2]	ALB	SKJ	YFT[2]
E. ATLANTIC OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	0	0	0	0	0	0
IMPORTED	9,600	5,300	2,500	4,100	14,300	13,300
TOTAL	9,600	5,300	2,500	4,100	14,300	13,300
W. ATLANTIC OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	0	0	0	0	0	0
IMPORTED	6,300	1,100	100	7,300	400	1,300
TOTAL	6,300	1,100	100	7,300	400	1,300
E. PACIFIC OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	0	3,400	18,300	*	3,400	4,600
IMPORTED	0	6,300	6,900	0	100	1,900
TOTAL	0	9,700	25,200	0	3,500	6,600
W. PACIFIC OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	1,800	19,800	13,000	1,900	24,100	14,300
IMPORTED	8,500	8,900	4,400	7,000	13,800	5,300
TOTAL	10,200	28,700	17,400	8,800	37,900	19,500
INDIAN OCEAN						
DOMESTIC	0	0	0	0	0	0
IMPORTED	900	5,600	2,900	1,600	400	100
TOTAL	900	5,600	2,900	1,600	400	100

*Less than 100 st reported for this category.
[1]ALB=albacore; SKJ=skipjack; YFT=yellowfin.
[2]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

Table 5. Contract price ranges (U.S. $ per st) for skipjack and yellowfin tuna for delivery to U.S. canneries in American Samoa and Puerto Rico by U.S. vessels arriving from trips in second quarter 1990 and 1991.

SIZE CLASS	SKIPJACK		YELLOWFIN	
(lbs.)	1990	1991	1990	1991
<3	280-350	310-460	280-350	310-460
3 to 4	475-570	510-660	475-570	510-660
4 to 7.5	685-775	705-855	685-775	705-855
7.5 to 20	765-860	770-920	785-885	780-930
>20	—	—	885-1,075	835-985

Table 6. Total U.S. cannery receipts (st) by classification of tuna as received by packers for the **first two** quarters of 1990 and 1991. Totals may not add due to rounding.

SPECIES		Albacore	Skipjack	Yellowfin[1]	TOTAL
1990	ROUND	51,900	80,000	79,300	211,200
	GILLED & GUTTED	0	0	2,000	2,000
	LOIN	2,800	8,600	1,700	13,000
	TOTAL (AS RECEIVED)	54,600	88,500	83,000	226,100
	TOTAL (ESTIMATED RND WT)2	58,100	99,200	85,300	242,600
1991	ROUND	34,200	96,300	58,900	189,500
	GILLED & GUTTED	0	0	2,300	2,300
	LOIN	3,600	11,800	3,200	18,600
	TOTAL (AS RECEIVED)	37,800	108,100	64,400	210,300
	TOTAL (ESTIMATED RND WT)[2]	42,400	122,800	68,600	233,800

[1]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.
[2]Converted to round weight by using factors of 1.11 for gilled-and-gutted and 2.25 for loins.

U.S. TUNA FISHERIES UPDATE

EASTERN PACIFIC PURSE SEINE FISHERY

During the period January through September 1991, 15 U.S. purse seiners caught an estimated 16,100 metric tons (mt) of yellowfin tuna and 8,400 mt of skipjack tuna in the eastern tropical Pacific (Figure 1). The yellowfin catch was down 65% from the 1990 catch (46,100 mt) for the same period, while the skipjack catch was up 8% from the 1990 catch (7,800 mt). The differences in the catches in 1991 are largely the result of a reduction in the size of the U.S. fleet and the concentration of effort by the remainder of the fleet on non-dolphin associated fish. At the end of September 1991 the number of active U.S. purse seiners in the eastern Pacific stood at 10 compared to 20 for the same period of 1990. U.S. canners' policy of not purchasing tuna caught in association with dolphins is the primary cause for this reduction in the U.S. fleet and in 1991 catches.

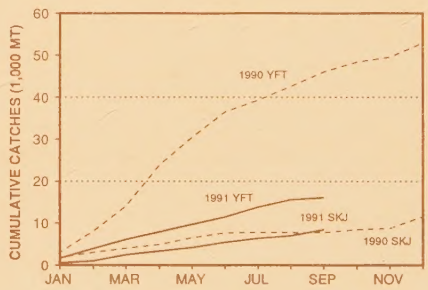

Figure 1. Cumulative tuna catches, by month, for the U.S. eastern Pacific purse seine fishery, 1990 and 1991.

WESTERN PACIFIC PURSE SEINE FISHERY

During the period January through August 1991, 40 U.S. purse seiners landed an estimated 87,800 mt of skipjack tuna and 29,400 mt of yellowfin tuna in the western Pacific (Figure 2). Skipjack landings were up 22% from 1990 landings (72,000 mt) for the same period, and yellowfin landings were down 17% from 1990 landings (35,400 mt). Fishing

Table 7. U.S. cannery receipts (st) of domestic and imported tuna by species for the first two quarters of 1990, 1991 and the recent (1986-90) averages. Totals may not add due to rounding.

SPECIES		Albacore	Skipjack	Yellowfin[1]	TOTAL
1990	DOMESTIC	4,500	43,400	54,500	102,300
	IMPORTED	50,200	45,100	28,500	123,800
	TOTAL	54,600	88,500	83,000	226,100
1991	DOMESTIC	5,000	53,700	28,500	87,200
	IMPORTED	32,800	54,300	35,900	123,100
	TOTAL	37,800	108,100	64,400	210,300
1986-90 Average	DOMESTIC	2,300	51,000	65,500	118,800
	IMPORTED	51,800	53,300	35,900	141,000
	TOTAL	54,100	104,300	101,500	259,900

[1]May include a small amount of bigeye tuna.

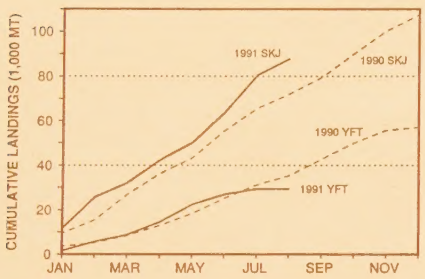

Figure 2. Cumulative tuna landings, by month, for the U.S. western Pacific purse seine fishery, 1990 and 1991.

was concentrated in two separate areas--Papua New Guinea-Solomon Islands area and Kiribati area.

NORTHERN PACIFIC ALBACORE FISHERY

The just-completed 1991 U.S. north Pacific albacore season consisted of sporadic and generally slow fishing. Preliminary landing figures show declines in all areas from last year's catches, with 600 mt in California (down 18%), 500 mt in Oregon (down 47%) and 400 mt in Washington (down 63%). The total of 1,500 mt (down 46% from last year) will probably turn out to be the poorest season on record.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC ALBACORE FISHERY

Statistics for the 1990-91 south Pacific albacore troll season are still preliminary, with 70+ vessels of all flags landing approximately 7,100 mt, up 37% from 1989-90. Fifty-eight of the vessels were from the U.S., and they landed about 5,900 mt.

ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA FISHERY

The U.S. Atlantic bluefin tuna fishery is regulated with an ICCAT annual catch quota of 1,387 mt. As of October 3, the total commercial landings for 1991 stood at 842 mt, down 21% from the 1990 landings (1,068 mt) for the same period. However, the rod-and-reel gear-type quota was oversubscribed, and NMFS announced its intention to close that fishery. *(Data provided by Kathi Rodriques, NMFS Northeast Region, Gloucester, MA)*

Gary Rensink and Laura Halko, SWFSC, contributed to this article.

REPORTS

Editor's note: Original reports are published as a service to subscribers and may not represent the views of the NMFS. Readers should contact the authors of reports for details, if needed. (D. Au)

NMFS ALTERNATIVE FISHING METHODS PROGRAM

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BACKGROUND

As a result of the recent reauthorization of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) began a new round of research to further reduce or eliminate the incidental take of dolphins in the tuna purse seine fishery of the eastern tropical Pacific (ETP). Progress has been made on two projects to date, both focussed on catching yellowfin tuna not associated with dolphins. The first project seeks to increase searching efficiency for non-dolphin associated tuna by employing a new technology to locate sub-surface fish and surface fish when normal sighting conditions are poor. The second project is designed to assess the usefulness of deploying artificial logs as fish attractants in areas where natural logs are not usually available but where fish are plentiful.

STATUS

Project 1 (LIDAR): Laser-based detecting devices (LIDAR) have been used for many years by atmospheric scientists to measure atmospheric constituents from a distance. This concept has been proposed to detect objects suspended in seawater by downward-directed laser systems, similar to LIDAR, aboard an aircraft.

Airborne optical laser systems have been previously shown by J. Squire, SWFSC, and H. Krumboltz, U.S. Naval Air Development Center, to be useful for profiling sub-surface schools of pelagic fishes. The systems are also potentially applicable for species identification, according to studies by J. Churnside and P. McGillivary of the Wave Propagation Laboratory in Boulder, Colorado. The size and weight of the current equipment, however, has limited commercial application for fisheries. Fish spotters generally fly single engine fixed wing aircraft, or, as in the tuna purse seine fishery, small helicopters.

Development of a LIDAR applicable for use on a small helicopter was contracted by SWFSC with Remote Sensing Industries of Eastham, Massachusetts. A prototype

system was developed that weighs 110 kilograms and fits in the aft passenger area of a Bell Jet Ranger helicopter.

The LIDAR unit was installed and tested in a helicopter operating off a tuna seiner owned by Caribbean Marine Service Co. of San Diego, California. Flights were made over coastal waters of southern California on three consecutive days in late May 1991 and again during a 10-day period in September 1991. Attempts were made to detect and identify sub-surface pelagic schools of fish and to detect the sea bottom as well. Refinements and modifications were made during the testing to adapt to the conditions of turbidity of inshore water, hazy weather and "red tide" along the coastline. The bottom was successfully contoured, and several profiles believed to be of schooling fish were recorded. Further testing of the system is planned for the ETP in December 1991 when attempts will be made to detect tuna schools in oceanic waters.

Project 2 (FADS): Fish aggregating devices (FADs) are artificial structures that attract fish. NMFS and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) are working together on a project funded by Bumble Bee Seafood Co. to investigate the effectiveness of drifting FADs in concentrating tunas in the ETP. The goal is to provide fishermen with an alternative to fishing on dolphin-associated schools for capture of mature tuna. FADs of various designs are being deployed. FAD design, areas of deployment and optimum fishing times during day or night are some of the factors being investigated.

Two FADs with satellite transmitters for remote tracking were deployed in January 1991. These two units were identical in design and were deployed offshore of Costa Rica where they were expected to drift westward. One unit drifted for 34 days and ceased transmitting near the coast of El Salvador. The other FAD drifted in a westerly direction for 175 days and travelled approximately 2,900 miles before its satellite transmitter ceased to function. The main purpose for deploying these two units was to test their durability at sea and the ability to track and relocate them via satellite.

Thirty FADs (10 groups of 3 identical FADs) were deployed in July. The deployment was well offshore, in the area from 9°N to 11°N between 121°W and 124°W. These FADs were of four basic designs and were equipped with various tracking and locating devices. They range from surface units only to surface units with attached arrays of rope, scrap netting, etc., descending to 50 fathoms. One FAD in each group of three FADs was equipped with a satellite transmitter which provides positions that are accurate to within one kilometer. The other two FADs were equipped with selective calling (SELCALL) medium-wave radio buoys which operate only when activated by a signal generator. A signal generator aboard a fishing vessel can activate the transmitter from a distance of up to 200 kilometers. FADs were also outfitted with radar reflectors and/or strobe lights for easier detection.

These deployed FADs are being monitored by the SWFSC and IATTC. The positions, drift directions and drift rates of the FADs are being determined and the information provided daily to vessel managers for transmission to vessels at sea. Advisories in English and Spanish are also being issued from NMFS radio station KHU in San Diego, from a radio station in Ensenada, Mexico, and through IATTC field offices throughout Latin America.

Several FAD observations (sightings and sets) have been reported so far by tuna vessels. The FADs observed appear to be in generally good condition, despite having gone through several hurricanes. Reports indicate that all of the observed FADs have accumulated some fauna. Three fishing sets on the FADs resulted in a total of 16 tons of yellowfin and 13 tons of skipjack tuna being caught. On one set, the captain estimated that 15 tons of tuna escaped capture.

The electronics aboard the FADs have a battery life through at least March 1992. Recent information indicates that the majority of FADs are drifting eastward towards areas where purse seine vessels are concentrated.

In late November 1991, 30 more FADs are planned for deployment. This third phase of the project is targeting deployment for southerly waters, approximately 5°N to 10°S and between 85°W and 100°W of the ETP.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TUNA FISHERIES

Editor's note: The following news items, compiled from fishery trade and industry journals, newspapers and NMFS reports, are provided only as a service to our readers. The NMFS does not guarantee their accuracy.

UNITED STATES

FFA-U.S. Treaty on Fisheries-- The Treaty on Fisheries between the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and the U.S. entered smoothly into its fourth period on 15 June 1991. The FFA, as administrator, issued licenses to 47 U.S. purse seiners, compared to 50 seiners licensed for the third period. Treaty payments received for the fourth period totaled $12.8 million. Over the licensing period, only 41 vessels actually fished in the treaty area, catching a record of over 220,000 st of tuna. Of the 41 vessels, 11 had moved into the area

from the eastern Pacific. Since the treaty entered into force in June 1988, the total payments received for the Pacific Island parties reached over $49 million. (Forum Fisheries Agency, *News Digest*, July-August 1991)

FFA Observers on U.S. Purse Seiners--Twenty-five FFA-contracted observers boarded and monitored the operations of the U.S. tuna purse seiners during the third licensing period (15 June 1990 to 14 June 1991). The observers reported generally good compliance by the U.S. vessel operators to the requirements of the treaty. There was, however, poor recording of discards. The observer program has reached a 14% coverage of vessel trips during the last two periods. This has been achieved with few problems and with good cooperation from NMFS and vessel operators. (Forum Fisheries Agency, *News Digest*, July-August 1991)

EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN

Venezuela-Costa Rica Free Trade Agreement Discussed--During a recent visit to Venezuela by the president of Costa Rica, the major point of discussion was the Free Trade Agreement between the two countries. Among the subjects discussed was a closer collaboration between the tuna industries of the two countries. A commission will study two matters of importance. The first deals with the proposal to allow Venezuelan purse seiners access to Costa Rican waters at very favorable licence fees in exchange for a guaranteed supply of tuna to Costa Rican loining and canning operations. The second matter concerns a transshipment and resupply center for tuna vessels to be established close to Puntarenas, Costa Rica. However, there are still many legal and infrastructural matters to be arranged before such a center could be expected to successfully compete with more established centers in the region, such as in Panama. (*INFOFISH Trade News*, 16 July 1991)

Mexican Tuna Fishery--Unconfirmed reports from Mexico suggest that 1990 was a difficult year for the tuna industry and that problems continue in 1991. The problem appears to be in retaining their export markets and the saturation of the domestic market. The Mexican fleet as of March 1991 consisted of 57 seiners with a total carrying capacity of 45,000 st. Several small seiners have withdrawn from the fishery. Five seiners withdrew in 1990 (1,400 st) and 3 seiners in early 1991 (1,000 st). The 1990 catch was 140,000 st, about the same as in 1989. Preliminary reports, however, suggest that fishermen are reporting very good 1991 catches. Mexico only exported 43,000 st of tuna in 1990, nearly 50% below the 83,000 st shipped in 1989. Fishermen had to rely on the domestic market to sell the tuna they could not export. Mexico has depended heavily on Italian canneries which are now reducing purchases and offering lower prices. The failure to develop diversified markets is having a significant adverse impact. Preliminary 1991 reports from Mexico suggest that fishermen are having great difficulties marketing their catch. Some vessels are tied up in Ensenada, unable to land their catch because of the weak market. (NMFS Office of International Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 1-5 July 1991)

WESTERN PACIFIC OCEAN

Fewer Driftnet-Damaged Albacore Observed--A leading New Zealand fisheries scientist has identified several factors he believes will play a major part in eliminating high seas drift-netting. They include, according to Dr. Talbot Murray, a decline in the amount of net-damaged fish caught this season by the albacore trolling fleet working to the east of New Zealand. The fall in net damage coincides with the withdrawal of the Japanese fleet from the South Pacific one year ahead of the U.N. resolution, plus a much smaller Taiwanese presence than in recent years. Dr. Talbot said that the South Pacific moratorium is already proving positive for New Zealand. "They (the troll fishermen) know the fishery is going to be around for a while now and they can start developing their resources. There has already been some local spin-off. The Americans are quite enthusiastic about engineering and support services, and more skippers have indicated that they will be spending the off-season here."

Bluefin Tuna Farm for South Australia--A $2.2 million research project to farm bluefin tuna is to be set up at Boston Bay, Port Lincoln, to the west of the South Australian capital, Adelaide. The tripartite agreement between the Japanese overseas Fishery Cooperative Foundation, Australian tuna boat owners and the Government of South Australia means that the Australian southern bluefin tuna industry could be worth up to $150 million within seven years. Through the aquaculture project, South Australia expects to increase its bluefin tuna industry, maintain the quality of stock and provide a ready supply of the product. (*World Fishing*, June 1991)

Tuna Plant Project for Micronesia--A freezing plant and cold store facility is being set up on the western Pacific island of Kosrae in the first stage of a $4.7 million turnkey project to develop tuna processing capabilities in the Federated States of Micronesia. The remote island of Kosrae--some 155 miles northeast of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea--is having a cold store, ice-making and tuna loin freezing plant designed, manufactured and installed by Acme International Freezing Systems of Perth, Western Australia. The project will also provide some facilities for longline and

purse seine vessels in the area. Once commissioned, the project will create employment for several hundred islanders. (*Fishing News International*, August 1991)

Marshall Islands Can Support Tuna Plant--A study into the development of tuna processing and transshipment facilities in the Republic of the Marshall Islands has proposed investing $12.5 million in a cannery and loin freezing factory. If the islands take up the option presented in a report prepared by Living Marine Resources of San Diego, California, the project would create about 375 full- and part-time jobs. LMR's study was wide-ranging, covering the regional tuna resources and their potential, tuna fishing methods and catches, regional tuna facilities, international tuna markets, and tuna processing methods. Various options were examined. "The analyses show tuna processing in Majuro is technically and commercially feasible, but limited due to fresh water availability and markets. Tuna canning has greater viability than the other options," according to LMR. (*Fishing News International*, July 1991)

Taiwan Distant Water Purse Seine Fleet Grows--Taiwan has added 9 vessels to its skipjack purse seine fleet in 1991 and now has a total of 44 purse seiners. The Taiwanese fleet operates primarily in the western Pacific. With U.S. and Korean fleets fishing in the same area, Japanese industry analysts feel that over-capitalization is inevitable. Since Japanese vessels do not have access to the lucrative Papua New Guinean and Indonesian EEZs, the Japanese purse seine industry plans to shift its operations to the Indian Ocean. The Japanese Government has given the purse seine industry permission to conduct high seas exploratory fishing in the Indian Ocean. (NMFS Office of International Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 16-20 September 1991)

Papua New Guinea-South Korean Fishing Agreement--Papua New Guinea and South Korea have signed a new fishing agreement, licensing Korean tuna fishing vessels to operate in Papua New Guinean waters. At present 43 licenses to fish for tuna have been issued to South Korean vessels. (Forum Fisheries Agency, *News Digest*, September-October 1991)

Japan-Palau Fisheries Agreement--The governments of Japan and Palau have signed a fisheries agreement which will go into effect on 1 February 1992. Japan and Palau have been negotiating for the past two years on a revision of the existing fisheries treaty. The principal stumbling block had been Palau's insistence on maintaining the original lump-sum payments in opposition to Japan's advocacy of a per-vessel, per-trip payment system. Palau finally accepted the per-vessel, per-trip system, but Japan will continue to make direct cash payments until the new agreement goes into effect. In the final analysis, Palau's need for revenue overcame domestic political pressure to maintain the direct cash payments. (NMFS Office of International Affairs, *Weekly Highlights*, 23-27 September 1991)

INDIAN OCEAN

Soviet Fleet Set to Boost Tuna Catch--The second tuna purse seiner built for the Soviet Union in Spain left the Astilleros de Huelva shipyard in July. She is the 80 meter long and 1,950 cubic meter capacity *Tivela*, the first sister ship to the *Kauri* which was delivered in May. These two vessels are a part of a ten-ship order from the Pythagoras Shipping Corp. of Liberia. Pythagoras is chartering each Huelva-built tuna ship to the USSR state-run VO Sovrybflot, with five to be registered at Kaliningrad and five at Vladivostok for Dalryba. The seiners are slated for operation in the Indian Ocean. (*Fishing News International*, August 1991)

1991 TUNA MEETINGS

(Organizer; meeting type: sci=science, adm=administration)

- NOV 4-8. Fourth meeting of the South Pacific Albacore Research Group. Taiwan. (South Pacific Commission; sci)
- NOV 11-15. International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, Commission Meeting. Madrid, Spain. (ICCAT; adm)
- DEC 3-11. FAO Expert Consultation on Tuna Interactions. Noumea, New Caledonia. (FAO; sci)
- DEC 16-18. Albacore Management, Fourth Consultation. Suva, Fiji. (Forum Fisheries Agency; adm)

EASTERN ATLANTIC OCEAN

Sao Tome and Principe-EC Fishing Agreement--Sao Tome and Principe and the European Community (EC) have reached an agreement on fishing rights for EC vessels for the period 1 June 1990 to 31 May 1993. Fishing rights have been granted for 46 EC tuna seiners and 5 pole-and-line vessels. In return, the EC will pay $1.45 million in compensation and contribute $132,000 towards the financing of technical and scientific programs to benefit Sao Tome and Principe. (*INFOFISH Trade News*, 1 July 1991)

Mauritania-EC Fishing Agreement--Mauritania and the EC have reached an agreement on fishing rights for EC vessels for the period 1 August 1990 to 31 July 1993. Fishing rights were granted for 25

tuna purse seiners. (*INFOFISH Trade News*, 1 July 1991)

WESTERN ATLANTIC OCEAN

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Management Plan--The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans has announced details of the 1991 Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Management Plan. The government developed the plan (in consultation with the Atlantic Large Pelagics Advisory Committee) following the annual International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas meeting. The plan calls for: (1) an allocation of 573 t (set by ICCAT) to Canadian fishermen; (2) a new inshore allocation system for this quota, aimed at improving the distribution of catches among the licensed fishermen; and (3) a new reallocation system of unfilled quotas, to ensure that Canadian fishermen can more effectively harvest the country's quota. (NMFS Office of International Affairs, *The Latest Developments in West European and Canadian Fisheries*, August 1991)

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